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RISE OF THE GERMAN INNER MISSION.

LITERATURE. A few important titles may be given here. Leitfaden der inneren Mission, by Pastor T. Schäfer. Die Lehre der inneren Mission, by Dr. Paul Wurster. Die christliche Liebesthätigkeit seit der Reformation, by J. G. W. Uhlhorn. Die Kirchengeschichte des achtzehnten und neunzehnten Jahrhunderts, by Dr. K. R. Hagenbach. Fliegende Blätter des Rauhe Hauses. Monatsschrift für Diakonie und innere Mission. Ratzinger, die kirchliche Armenpflege (R.C.). Those who wish to pursue the subject further will find full bibliography in these works.

I.

In a previous article¹ it was attempted to indicate the function of the voluntary association in social movements, and it was then said that "it is a part of the plan of this JOURNAL to publish descriptions, estimates and criticisms of many forms of free coöperation for human ends." The abstract formulas are made more intelligible when clothed in the garment of concrete reality. The method of study is made clearer by an example of its use. The subject of this article has more than scientific and theoretical interest at this time. The churches of America are awakening to a consciousness of their social responsibility for the possession of vast resources of wealth and influence. New conditions confront them, especially in cities. The population is no longer homogeneous, for all races and religions are crowded together in urban communities. Social classes are more sharply defined and more severely antagonistic. Economic conditions force people apart, crime arises from social friction, public opinion crosses barriers tardily, and spiritual agencies are blocked by unexpected obstacles.

In this new situation we turn to older communities in order to learn from their dearly-bought experience. The experiment which promises most instruction for Protestants in this country

¹*American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. I, No. 3, p. 327.

is the German Inner Mission. This term covers the work of many independent voluntary associations of members of the "Evangelical" state church on behalf of the dependent, the feeble and the anti-social elements of society. But there is a strong tendency to extend the meaning of the term to include forms of church work in wider and higher fields. It is the purpose of this paper to outline the essential social forces which brought this movement into being and gave it direction during the opening years of this century. These same causes are at work, in other forms, in America, and we are beginning to see similar results. They must be studied from a social standpoint, since economic, political, educational, ecclesiastical, customary and other elements are blended and coöperant.

Comte wrote²: "If we desire to familiarize ourselves with this historical method, we must employ it first upon the past, by endeavoring to deduce every well-known historical situation from the whole series of its antecedents." No single phenomenon of society can be explained without taking into account all the forces of society, antecedent and coexistent. It may be difficult to be certain that we have found all these forces, and difficult to measure their relative importance and causal energy. But to recite a series of facts without any attempt to estimate the causes is waste of time. If we are to learn anything of practical value we must seek these causes. For, as Comte says again: "We must have learned to predict the past, so to speak, before we can predict the future; because the first use of the observed relations among fulfilled facts is to teach us by the anterior succession what the future succession will be."

The causes at work in the "Inner Mission" were distinctly and characteristically human and spiritual. The soil and climate, the physical environment, have not greatly changed. The economic improvements were, indeed, causes of social effort, but they were also effects of spiritual conceptions, of national aspirations, of higher ideals of what man may be and ought to become.

² *Positive Philosophy* II, 89.

Economic conditions and theories.—Many of the occasions for the benevolent enterprise called the Inner Mission lay in the industrial situation of Germany, and the particular forms of charity were determined by the forms of distress. Germany, at the beginning of this century, was an agricultural country, but it had already entered the circle of manufacturing and commercial competition. The seaport cities naturally shared very early in this movement and in its good and evil effects. The working people had little class consciousness and no voice in public affairs. Those who visited prisons, workhouses, hovels and homes of misery gradually learned how pitiful was the lot of the poor. The usual causes of pauperism and crime, individual and social, were at work. The ancient guild regulation was breaking up. The apprentice could no longer look forward to a secure place and income, however small, but the laborer, boy or man, was still under rigid control. The army of beggars was large and the Elberfeld system of relief had not yet been organized. Serfdom, already practically obsolete, was abolished in Prussia in 1807, but actual release from feudal burdens could not come in a day.

Political.—There was no German Empire, but only a throng of divided jealous states and free cities. Here and there a seer dreamed of national unity. There was no such attempt to popularize government in Germany as in England, France and America. Absolute monarchy was the ideal, and the leading classes hoped to make the centralized and personal government the instrument of progress. Schiller said: "When the people free themselves, prosperity cannot be gained." Goethe did not favor popular movements, but looked to courts for help. The French Revolution had a powerful influence in arousing the middle-class citizens to a consciousness of their rights and powers. A part of Germany, subjected to the yoke of the French conqueror and oppressor, learned to value the privileges conferred on them by the imposed code. Notable reforms attended the abolition of serfdom; freedom of occupation increased; Stein's measures gave to cities and provinces a sense of self-government

and local life; military reforms called the humblest citizens to feel that they had a duty to the nation and a share in common dangers and glories; greater freedom of religious confessions was secured; privileges of nobility were diminished.

The wars of liberation, the splendid struggles to throw off the Napoleonic yoke, were attended by awful sufferings and caused the ruin of multitudes of families; but they also quickened moral earnestness, patriotic fervor, national spirit, charity for the distressed, religious zeal and faith. Rich and poor, noble and burgher were involved in one peril and made common cause. There came reactions, but the social chasm was never quite so wide as before. Freedom of association, broken at the fall of the guilds, was somewhat restored in the new forms. Members of trades, professions, and churches, artists and philanthropists profited by this tendency and opportunity. Remembrance of the tyranny of guilds, however, contributed to the suspicion and fear which retarded the growth of voluntary associations.

Social ideals of culture.—The Illumination did its work and sowed its seed. Kant and Fichte brought men to a consciousness of the powers of reason. Lessing taught men to regard education as a part of the divine plan of revelation. Goethe and Schiller represented human existence in its beauty and harmony. Men began to believe that almost anything is possible to education. Rationalism had induced men to lean on themselves. The Illumination was superficially optimistic; it promised the Golden Age after a brief and easy contest with tyranny and darkness. It was ethical in a mild way, but religious fervor was a suspect. Reason was set against authority; sin and redemption were lightly touched; atomistic individualism was a mark of theory. Humanity was a great word, and fine sentiments found eloquent and pathetic literary forms; but little hard work was done to effectively organize help. For such obscure and self-sacrificing heroism of deed other elements were required. The great literature produced by the demi-gods of culture helped to blend the discordant dialects and give the people one language, and that not the French in which Frederick the Great loved to write, but

the native German. Scholars used the tongue in which mothers taught their children to pray.

The ethical writings of Kant and Fichte led men toward moral earnestness. The easy-going and superficial eudemonism of the eighteenth century was set aside and a deeper appeal was made to duty and conscience. The Illumination had looked for happiness on earth, Pietism expected it only in heaven. The ethical philosophers set duty first. Thus was strengthened the conception of religion which Uhlhorn states: "Religion is not a mere devout dream, not a thing which exists for its own sake, a pursuit for special hours and days; but it is an inner spirit, a thinking and acting which pervades all conduct, quickening and controlling."

The growth of common schools and cheap newspapers had manifold and important effects. The standard of living was raised, higher aspirations and social discontent were awakened. Miseries and needs were brought to the attention of the educated and wealthy, social conscience and consciousness grew apace, and benevolent impulse created societies for relief.

The church and religious life.—Rationalism had produced in the pulpit an ethical essay which often descended to puerilities and seldom rose to fervor. The need of redemption was not felt and education was equivalent to salvation. Inferior preachers filled sermons with technical advice about horticulture, stock raising and rotation of crops. Supernaturalism was as depressing as rationalism. It dwelt on the transcendence of God, regarded him as an absentee landlord, removed him far from men, identified faith with creed, lost the vital bond between faith and love. Pietism was another part of the bequest of the last century to ours. The memory of the famous benevolent institutions of Spener and Francke long survived them. Here and there a group of earnest people, especially in southern Germany, kept the traditions of pietistic zeal. But Pietism was too individualistic and unsocial to produce any general system of coöperation in evangelistic or benevolent work. Business, art, politics, were excluded as "secular" from the religious ideal. Pietists

worked for individual souls and neglected the institutions of society. With all their fervor and faith they never could become a leaven in the life of mankind. A study of Pietism would furnish much instruction for churches of a similar type in this country.

The "mediating theology" helped to supply the bond between the better elements of the Illumination and Pietism, between culture and piety, humanity and faith.

Dissenters from other countries only gradually gained a foothold, but parties and sects within the established church were numerous enough to prevent stagnation. Freethinkers of the rationalistic type were frequently in possession of ecclesiastical funds and buildings, and were not always liberal and tolerant in the exercise of their power. Mennonites, Moravians and other humble sects exercised local influence on limited groups. The Methodist movement extended its influence to Germany by means of books, tracts and men. The seaport cities and inland trading cities were in communication with England, and members of the "Evangelical" church were stirred by the new spirit of British revivalists and reformers. In later years the Germans assimilated the new elements but developed the ideas in their own way.

Specific labors of evangelization.—The social work of the church grew out of the spirit of evangelization. Johann August Urlsperger represents the transition from the old Pietism to the new movement in which culture, humanity and piety were united. He founded the "Christian Society" in 1780. Its purpose was to foster "pure doctrine and true godliness," and it began by assailing rationalism in the church. The founder was influenced by the English "Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge," and by the Swedish society "For Faith and Christianity." Among the specific tasks of the "Christian Society" fell the distribution of religious publications, assistance to scattered Protestants living in Roman Catholic districts, and the care of orphans and other dependent children. Branches were formed in Switzerland, England and America.

Strict observance of the Sabbath was exacted from members, and specified hours were appointed for concerted prayer for all men and for the kingdom of Christ. All who were in sympathy with the purpose of the society were received; members of all confessions, merchants, day-laborers, counts and princes were alike welcome. Practical labors of love held them together for some years, but the varied elements could not be combined, and, in 1833, the society ceased to exist. It helped to prepare the way for the Inner Mission by emphasizing the common spiritual need of Christendom, by giving an example of the efficiency of the voluntary association in the promotion of a common and neglected cause, and by holding fast to the value of the church while permitting great variety of opinion among the members.

Bible societies.—The influence of the English religious spirit and method is seen in the rise of voluntary societies for printing and circulating the Bible. John Wesley (died 1791) had sought to bring back the depraved and neglected classes to Christianity. He not only preached but also made much use of the printed page. The British and Foreign Bible Society was founded in 1804, and was composed of members of all denominations. In a committee meeting of the Tract Society in 1802, Thomas Charles, of Bala in Wales, told of his country's need of Bibles, and called for the formation of a society to meet this need. Joseph Hughes, a Baptist preacher and the secretary of the Tract Society, exclaimed: "Not only for Wales, but also for the kingdom and for the world." Steinkopf, formerly secretary of the "German Christian Society" and pastor of the Savoy church in London, brought the Bible cause to the attention of the German people. The Canstein publishing institution had been at work for a century in close connection with Francke's works at Halle, but it had not succeeded in extending the circulation of Bibles beyond three million copies. The first branch of the English Bible Society was established at Nuremberg (1804), and the merchant, Johann Tobias Kiessling (1743–1824) was one of its chief supporters, an earnestly devout man. As the Lutheran Reformation began with a republication of the Bible, so this revival

of social beneficence was closely and causally connected with the larger circulation of the inspiring book. Some Catholics, for a time, joined in the movement, but their efforts were checked by papal decree. Rationalistic pastors who had been hostile to the "Christian Society" assisted in this effort, and collections were widely taken in the Protestant churches.

The German Bible movement, at first due to English influence, made itself independent in consequence of the refusal of the English to print and publish the Apocrypha (1825-7). The British society excluded these books from their editions on the ground that they were uncanonical. The Germans demanded that they should be admitted, claiming that even canonical books vary in degrees of inspiration, and that the Apocrypha contains much material of value to the spiritual life. This doctrinal difference hastened the independent development of the German church.

Sunday schools.—Sunday schools did not originate with church authorities but with voluntary associations composed of zealous and far-sighted members of the church. Robert Raikes began this form of work with a small group of helpers in 1780, in Gloucester, England. He was moved to pity and action by observing the degraded condition of poor children who ran about the streets on Sunday, unclean and ignorant. He gathered some of them in a room and taught them the elements of knowledge and religion. At first he employed salaried teachers, but later advanced to unpaid workers. J. G. Oncken was agent of the British Bible Society in Hamburg, and was in correspondence with England. He established, in coöperation with Pastor Rautenberg, the first German Sunday school in St. George, a suburb of Hamburg, in 1825. This same Sunday school is famous for being the training school of J. H. Wichern, "father of the Inner Mission," founder of the Rauhe Haus at Horn. Oncken afterwards became a Baptist and the leader of that denomination in Germany. The Sunday school in Germany has not followed the English course of development, but has its own peculiar German form.

The circulation of Christian writings.—The English influence is

seen again in some of the earlier efforts to provide and circulate a popular religious literature, without which the spirit of the Inner Mission and all its social service would have been impossible. In 1811, however, the "Christian Society in North Germany" was founded by Lady von Öynhausen and Candidate Uhle, apart from foreign influence. British money and personal service assisted in establishing the "Wupperthaler Tract Society" (1814), the "Principal Society for Christian Literature in the Prussian States" (Berlin, 1814), and the "Lower Saxony Society for the Diffusion of Edifying Christian Works" (Hamburg, 1820). The last-named society had an English preacher as its head. The doctrines of these tracts were regarded by the Germans as morbid and unsuitable for the national life. They were too "Methodistical and foreign."

Tract doctrines in southern Germany became very influential. The Calwer Tract Society was founded by Christian Gottlob Barth in 1829, under English influences. Barth was as eager to assist the heathen with the gospel as to help the children of his own country. The Stuttgart "Evangelical Society" (1835) grew out of a tract society, and helped to diffuse the influence of Pietism in Württemberg.

Religious weekly newspapers date from this period. In Württemberg the *Christian Messenger* (1832) was published by Pastor C. F. Burk. In Bavaria the *Sunday Paper* was founded (1831) by Pastor Redenbacher, and in Bremen the *Church Messenger*, by Pastor Mallet. These papers, unlike some occasional religious publications of an earlier date, were not confined to edification in personal piety, but extended their discussions to the great events of the age, and led the members of the church to think upon the connection of the kingdom of heaven with the life of the age.

The Inner Mission grew out of the same spirit which prompted missions to the heathen. Foreign missions were neglected by Protestants long after the Reformation. Fighting for country and creed absorbed energy. But the Lutheran foreign mission work began early in the eighteenth century. Ziegenbalg and

Plütschau went to Tranquebar in 1715. The work of foreign missions developed the conception of philanthropy in its true sense, love of man as man, without limits of race or country; it awakened the consciousness of social power and duty; and it demonstrated the efficiency of voluntary organizations. We can at this date hardly imagine the suspicion, fear and almost contempt with which private and unofficial bodies were then regarded. The very principle of the voluntary association was in doubt.

Benevolent social work.—Since the Reformation all Protestant countries have regarded the care of the dependent poor as a function of the local or general government. Practically, though not theoretically, the right of the poor to receive help in extremity has been admitted. In Roman Catholic countries the church has contended against this view, and secured a larger place in the direction of relief systems. In Germany, as in New England, the citizens of a parish constituted a religious as well as a secular community, and poor relief was the duty of this local corporation. The distinction of church and state was not sharply drawn. Owing to political and economical causes the civil commune has assumed the duty of public relief, and the church officials gradually withdrew from the task. With the abolition of serfdom (1807) began a series of acts (1842, 1857, 1870) which secured freedom of travel, and prevented landowners from hindering persons without means from gaining a settlement. While the tendency in South Germany, especially Bavaria, was to make local relief depend on local citizenship, yet the general tendency was toward the obligation to care for a needy German anywhere in Germany. Many of the funds and endowments which had belonged to the church, Protestant and Catholic, were secularized. But this had one good result: it made personal zeal and renewed sacrifices more necessary, and promoted a revival of charity and mutual helpfulness. Meantime the attempts to drive organizations of religious workers from the field of charity ended in failure.

Among the conditions essential to the origin and progress of

the Inner Mission were certain inventions in the field of charity. In the eighteenth century Abbé l' Epée invented a language for deaf mutes and made their education possible. This method was further developed by S. Heinecke (1778). John Howard (1775-81), had journeyed through Europe, descended into dungeons, measured the misery of prisoners and of the insane, and appealed to the humanity of Christendom. Dr. Pinel at Paris had released the insane from their chains, and helped to free mankind from oppressive superstitions in respect to nervous diseases. Thomas Chalmers (1780-1847) exercised a remarkable influence on European charity. He not only studied theology but natural science, mathematics and political economy, and he devoted his immense powers to practical measures for the welfare of the common people of Glasgow and elsewhere. He sought to make the church of a parish the responsible agency of poor relief, and under his management the plan succeeded. But the forces of the century were moving in another direction and the civil authorities afterward assumed control. His thought of assigning a small number of families to a friendly visitor was a contribution of high value, and it has been adopted into the Elberfeld system of municipal relief and into the parish methods of the German churches.

Elizabeth Fry (1780-1845), a Quaker lady of England, came into helpful contact with the German movement of charity. After her marriage she was busy for many years with the care of a family of eleven children, and yet her residence was the center of large and generous efforts. The Society of Friends train women for religious work and the world is richer for this fact. In 1813 Mrs. Fry made her first historic visit to Newgate Prison. She was profoundly moved by the condition of the women she found there and she set about securing important reforms; the separation of women from men, the organization of visitors and the provision for moral and spiritual instruction. Her labors were crowned with success, and she became so famous that she was invited to the continent, where she stirred many hearts to work for the fallen. Her motto expresses one of the principles

of the Inner Mission: "The soul of charity is charity for the soul."

Pestalozzi.—In this age of preparation the personality of the great Swiss teacher stands out conspicuous. In his career we discern the mingled elements of Pietism and of the Illumination. He studied theology and then law. In all his undertakings his plans came to grief through lack of practical sagacity. But his affectionate disposition, his genuine philanthropy, his lofty ideals of life and education gave to his writings a power which the world still feels. He gave a great incentive to the establishment of schools for saving neglected and abandoned children.

The wars of Napoleon and the wars of liberation multiplied the numbers of widows, orphans and neglected children. The cry of need fell on prepared hearts, made tender by Pietism and illuminated by Rationalism. Sympathy and the optimism of culture united in the doctrine that to elevate society we must begin with the children.

John Falk (1768–1826) was a personal embodiment of the conflicting forces of his age. The brief account of him given by Schäfer may fittingly close this article. The times are summed up in the man. Falk was the son of a poor man of Dantsic and could not, without the aid of friends, gain the education for which his whole nature hungered. Those who assisted him said: "If ever at any time, sooner or later, a poor child knocks at your door, then consider that it is the gray old magistrates and councillors of Dantsic who knock, and turn them not away." At first he turned his attention to satirical poetry, and his fame reached the classic little city of Weimar. Trouble opened his heart to the poor whose sufferings were inexpressibly increased by the Napoleonic wars. Fugitives from devastated homes found refuge at his house. He founded the society of "Friends in Need" and the house of rescue, "Lutherhof," at Weimar. The great poets of Weimar befriended him. He regarded himself as a missionary. "For eleven years the chief purpose followed by our society has been a missionary purpose, a rescue of souls, a conversion of heathen, not in Asia or Africa, but among our-

selves." He sought to "cheat the prison and house of correction out of as many candidates as possible." These ends he sought to accomplish by spiritual means. "All our chains are within." As parents do not need to keep their children in with locks and bolts, so we require no such helps. It is love, love born of faith, which overcomes." Music was cultivated. Sunday schools were formed for apprentices; spinning, sewing and knitting were taught; and steady labor was employed as a means of development and reformation. Such lives were expressions of the ideals and indications of the methods which were, at a later time, taken up into the "Inner Mission." But it required many years, many contests of discussion, and the devotion of many lives to awaken the evangelical people of Germany to their duty and to organize social movements of national importance and extent.

In subsequent numbers of the JOURNAL the later phases of historical development of the Inner Mission will be treated. It is hoped that materials for a judgment in respect to the possibilities of coöperation in social service in American church life may thus be presented.

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